

Please add new claims 24-39 as follows:

--24. A method for preparing, in a prokaryotic cell, a recombinant adenoviral vector of at least 20 kb into the genome of which an exogenous DNA sequence is inserted, by intermolecular recombination comprising the steps of:

(a) introducing into said prokaryotic cell: (i) a first DNA fragment comprising all or part of said adenoviral genome and (ii) a second DNA fragment comprising said exogenous DNA sequence surrounded by flanking sequences A and B which are homologous to (i), and

(b) culturing the prokaryotic cell obtained in (a) under suitable culture conditions to allow homologous recombination and insertion of the exogenous DNA into the first DNA fragment to occur, and recovering the resulting recombinant adenoviral vector.

25. The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the adenovirus is an adenovirus of human, canine, avian, bovine, murine, ovine, porcine or simian origin.

26. The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the adenovirus is a hybrid adenovirus.

27. The method according to claim 25 characterized in that the parent virus is a type CAV-2 adenovirus of canine origin.

28. The method according to claim 25, characterized in that the parent virus is a serotype C adenovirus of human origin.

29. The method according to claim 25, characterized in that the parent virus is a type 5 adenovirus of human origin.

30. The method according to claim 24, characterized in that said exogenous DNA sequence codes for a polypeptide of therapeutic interest selected from the group consisting of coagulation factors, growth hormones, cytokines, lymphokines, tumour-suppressing polypeptides, cell receptors, ligands for cell receptors, protease inhibitors, antibodies, toxins, immunotoxins, dystrophin and polypeptides participating in cellular ion channels.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein said polypeptide participating in cellular ion channels is a CFTR protein.

32. The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the homologous flanking sequences A and B are from 10 consecutive bp to 10 consecutive kb in length.

33. The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the first DNA fragment is linearized in the insertion region of the exogenous sequence.

34. The method according to claim 24, for the preparation of a recombinant viral vector which is defective for replication.

35. The method according to claim 34, for the preparation of a recombinant adenoviral vector lacking all or part of at least one region essential for replication, selected from the E1, E2 and E4 regions.

36. The method according to claim 35, characterized in that the recombinant adenoviral vector lacks, in addition, all or part of the E3 region.

37. The method according to claim 24, characterized in that said prokaryotic cell is a recBC strain of *Escherichia coli*.

38. A method according to claim 24, for the preparation of a recombinant viral vector of at least 30 kb.

39. A method for preparing an infectious viral particle containing a recombinant viral vector obtained by carrying out a method according to claim 24, according to which:

(a) said recombinant viral vector is introduced into a mammalian cell to generate a transfected mammalian cell,

- (b) said transfected mammalian cell is cultured under suitable conditions to permit the production of said viral particle, and
- (c) said viral particle is recovered from the cell culture obtained in step (b).

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